

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are now pending in the application. Paragraph [0001.1] of the Specification is deleted as further discussed below. Claims 1-20 stand rejected. Claims 1, 2, 4, 7-10, 12-14 and 17-18 are amended. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

SPECIFICATION

Paragraph [0001.1] entitled "Statement Regarding Federally Sponsored Research Or Development" is deleted in accordance with Applicants' Property Rights Statement and letter to Licensing and Review, copies of which are included with this Amendment and Response.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 8 and 13-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Smolik et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,290,570). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

At the outset, Applicants note that independent claim 1 is amended to include "...making a plurality of standard payload services available via a plurality of standardized payload integration points of the launch vehicle; and configuring the payload to interface with the standardized payload integration points to obtain payload services specific to the payload...."

Additionally, independent claim 7 is amended to recite a method for integrating a plurality of payloads with a launch vehicle. Claim 7 recites: "....configuring an interface element to interface with the payloads and with a plurality of standardized integration

points of the launch vehicle to allow the payloads to interface with a plurality of systems of the launch vehicle; configuring the payloads to interface with the interface element; and integrating the interface element with the launch vehicle without reconfiguring the launch vehicle.”

In addition, independent claim 14 is amended to recite: “... standardizing a plurality of integration points of the launch vehicle so that the integration points remain unchanged relative to different payload configurations; providing an interface element that can be configured to allocate services available from one or more systems of the launch vehicle via the standardized integration points to the payload; and configuring the payload to interface with the interface element.”

Applicants note that support for the foregoing amendments can be found in the specification as filed. Applicants submit that these features as claimed are not taught or suggested by Smolik. Specifically, Smolik does not teach or suggest making a plurality of standard payload services available via a plurality of standardized payload integration points, or configuring the payload to interface with the standardized payload integration points to obtain payload services specific to the payload, in contrast to the method recited in amended claim 1.

With reference to amended claim 7, Smolik does not teach or suggest configuring an interface element to interface with a plurality of payloads. With reference to amended claim 14, Smolik does not teach or suggest providing an interface element that can be configured to allocate services available from one or more systems of the launch vehicle via the standardized integration points to the payload. Applicants respectfully submit that amended claims 1, 7 and 14 should be allowed.

Claim 8 (dependent on claim 7) is amended to recite "...providing via the standardized integration points a plurality of standard payload services by the systems of the launch vehicle." Support for the foregoing amendment can be found in the specification as filed. Claims 2, 5, 8, 13 and 15-16 depend from claims 1, 7 or 14 and thus are respectfully submitted to be allowable.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 3, 4, 6, 9-12 and 17-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smolik et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,290,570) in view of Steffy (U.S. Pat. No. 4,711,417). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants note that claims 3, 4, 6, 9-12 and 17-20 all depend from independent claims 1, 7 or 14. As discussed previously, Applicants submit that claims 1, 7 and 14 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 3, 4, 6, 9-12 and 17-20 also should be allowed.

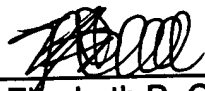
CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (314) 726-7521.

Respectfully submitted,

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